Introductions

An introductory paragraph should raise interest in your subject and present a thesis.

Some useful introductory strategies

1. Move from general statement to your specific thesis.

   Students beginning college encounter many challenges. They may face the responsibilities and freedoms of living away from home for the first time. They may face new financial strains and the pressures of handling both work and a college program. They deal with new academic subjects and new methods of instruction. Most find coping with their responsibilities increasingly difficult. As a result, time management skills are essential for first-year students.

2. Begin with a quotation that is relevant to your subject.

   "Time is fleeting," wrote Longfellow, and most first-year college students will agree.

3. Begin with an anecdote that leads into your subject.

   By mid-October of his first year of college, Max's life was in confusion. He had three essays, a presentation, and four mid-terms looming. He was twenty-three chapters behind in his reading. His apartment was filled with piles of laundry, dirty dishes, and empty pizza boxes. He hadn't been to the gym in a month. As Max was discovering, time management skills are essential for first-year students.

4. Start with a surprising fact or statistic.

   Recent studies suggest that top students spend less time studying than struggling students.

5. Start with a myth or misconception.

   Most people think of the busy corporate executive when they think of time management skills.

Introductions to avoid

1. The apologetic or humble introduction. I'm not an expert in this area, but from my reading I have learned some things about post-traumatic stress disorder.

2. The sweepingly general introduction. Of all world writers, Shakespeare is the most skilful in his use of imagery.

3. The announcement. In this essay, I will discuss three major causes of divorce.

Further help

A Proper Introduction (Guide to Grammar and Writing)
<http://ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/intros.htm>

Introductory Paragraphs: Beginnings (The UBC Writing Centre's Writer's Workshop)